

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP AWARD



Madhav Gadgil

Honorary membership in the Ecological Society of America is awarded to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the field of ecology and who live and work outside of the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. The 2001 Honorary ESA Member is Dr. Madhav Gadgil, one of the best and most prominent ecologists of our time. He is arguably the most distinguished ecologist in India, and is among the finest ecologists in Asia. Both his research and conservation interests successfully blend community ecology and human sociology as an unbroken continuum. He has had a profound effect on conservation in India, not only through his own work, but also by training many outstanding young ecologists.

Madhav Gadgil is totally committed to solving environmental problems in the Third World by analyzing issues carefully and applying ecological theory. These themes are discussed in two books, *This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India*, and *Ecology and Equity: Use and Abuse of Nature in Contemporary India*. These books are among the best expressions of the dilemmas of the equitable and sustainable use of natural resources.

Originally a fish biologist when he went to Harvard for his Ph.D., Gadgil became interested in issues

of life history evolution and the role of dispersal in population dynamics. He co-authored an influential book (M. Gadgil and W. H. Bossert. 1970, *Life History Consequences of Natural Selection*), and papers on selection of optimal life histories for plants, and on r and K theory.

After returning to India, he established the Center for Ecological Sciences at the Indian Institute of Science, which is the premier ecological research group in India. Research through CES embraces an enormous spectrum of topics, with students and faculty working on nonlinear dynamics, conservation biology, native plant restoration, insect ecology, forest ecology, elephant behavior, and ecology of native tribes. He has published on conservation, animal ecology, plant ecology, human ecology, and economics of resources, agriculture, and property rights. To each problem studied, Gadgil brings a fresh and usually novel insight, firmly rooted in ecological theory.

No ecologist in India has as much influence as Madhav Gadgil, both through his voluminous writing and his service as special counsel to the Indian government. His membership in several Academies of Science, and his active participation in international organizations and committees on ecology and conservation, also document his international stature and recognition.

Honorary Member Award Subcommittee: Laurel R. Fox (Chair), Edith Allen, James Coleman, Denise Dearing, Richard Ostfeld, Sandra Tartowski, Sally Woodin

